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C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 000082

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CEN, DRL, AND IO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/09/2013

TAGS: PHUM LY GT UNCHR

SUBJECT: GUATEMALA CONSULTING INTERNALLY ON LIBYAN CHAIR OF  
59TH CHR; SENDING NEW AMBASSADOR TO GENEVA

REF: SECSTATE 5849

Classified By: Ambassador John Hamilton for reason 1.5 (b).

Libya as Chair of UNCHR

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1. (C) Embassy raised reftel points with the MFA Director for Multilateral Affairs Sylvia Corado on January 9. Corado expressed her personal dismay with Libya chairing the UNCHR, but said that the GOG had not decided how it would respond to this unprecedented situation. Corado noted that Foreign Minister Gutierrez had only been in office ten days and had not been able to focus much on multilateral issues due to "growing problems in the bilateral relationship with the U.S. and the EU." Further complicating the matter is the fact that Guatemala is currently without an Ambassador in Geneva (see below). Given the importance of the issue, Corado said that Foreign Minister Gutierrez would want to formulate Guatemala's position himself and that he would probably consult President Portillo before making any final decisions. She promised to apprise him of our concerns. Although time is short, Corado was confident that Gutierrez would formalize Guatemala's position well in advance of the election in Geneva on January 20.

New Guatemalan Ambassador to Geneva

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2. (U) Foreign Minister Gutierrez has named Ronalht Ivan OCHAETA Argueta, a personal friend who has served for the last six months as Director of the OAS office in Lima, Peru, as Guatemala's new Ambassador to Geneva. According to the Foreign Ministry, Gutierrez made the decision to nominate Ochaeta on January 7. Ochaeta is expected to take up his duties as early as mid-January. Ochaeta's diplomatic career began in March of 2000 when he was named Ambassador to the OAS by President Portillo. His connection to Gutierrez stems from their work together as Human Rights leaders. Ochaeta and Gutierrez worked together on the REMHI report under the Auspices of the Catholic Church. Ochaeta worked for the ArchBishop's Office for Human Rights (ODHA) for six years. Ochaeta is a lawyer, 38 years old and married (NFI). He holds a Master's Degree in International Law. We have not heard why the GOG decided not to send Ambassador Rivera (formerly the GOG Ambassador in Washington) to Geneva as earlier announced.  
Hamilton